

Thomas Jefferson to Albert Gallatin, December 12, 1806, from The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY J. MSS. (ALBERT GALLATIN).

December 12, 1806.

Although I have the most perfect confidence in the integrity of Briggs, and very little in Davies, his accuser, yet where a charge is so specific and direct, our duty calls for investigation. The distance is too great to wait for preliminary explanation. I think with you that Mr. Williams, the former register will be a proper person to inquire into the charge, but that he would probably be less willing to undertake it alone than joined with another; and I would propose to join with him Mr. Dunbar, who deserves entire confidence. In the case of the removal proposed by the collector of Baltimore, I consider it as entirely out of my sphere, and resting solely with yourself. Were I to give an opinion on the subject, it would only be by observing that in the cases under my immediate care, I have never considered the length of time a person has continued in office, nor the money he has made in it, as entering at all into the reasons for a removal. The want of a collector at Chestertown shall be attended to with the first nominations. The allegations against Pope, of New Bedford, are insufficient. Although meddling in political caucusses is no part of that freedom of personal suffrage which ought to be allowed him, yet his mere presence at a caucus does not necessarily involve an active and official influence in opposition to the government which employs him. Affectionate salutations.